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The Bradford Farm

BY MONTY HEALY

Governor William Bradford, through land grants and purchases, acquired a substantial acreage in what was, at the time, the north precinct of Plymouth (now Kingston). This farm was sometimes referred to as the Stoney Brook Farm. The governor lived on the farm during the five years he was the assistant governor, and there is evidence to suggest that he lived there at other times. I have shown on the accompanying map what I believe to be the limits of the farm, although I have not proven the boundaries as yet – you'll have to wait for my book for that. Historian Emily Drew estimates the acreage as 226 acres; Historian Edwin D. Johnson as "about" 145 acres; and biographer James Shepard as "about 300 acres." So you can see the difficulty in fixing the area. There were well over 100 acres of the Bradford Farm that was in Duxbury (Nook area) for over 220 years (1637-1857).

In addition to his grants, Bradford acquired land from Thomas Cushman, Nicholas Snow, Thomas Willett, John Faunce, Stephen Deane, John Barker, Joseph Rogers, Stephen Tracey (probably), John Winslow, John Doane and Robert Hicks. A large portion of the property would have been "marsh meadow," as the property abutted the Jones River and Stoney Brook. There is a stone marker just east of Summer Street, near Foster Lane, commemorating the three generations of Bradfords who lived there. That would be the governor, his son William and grandson Major John Bradford.

When the governor died in 1657, his estate was valued at 900 pounds, the richest man in the colony to that time. The second wealthiest man was Myles Standish, who died in 1656 and left an estate of about 400 pounds.

We should be thankful that such a man as Governor William Bradford was there to begin the American experience.

This column was previously printed without the corresponding map. Here is

the correct map.

• Do you have an interest in Pilgrim history? Clipper contributor Monty Healy is looking for volunteers to help create an "Access" database of the un-indexed early records of the Plymouth Colony. No Access experience necessary. This work involves Pilgrim deeds, court cases, land grants, Indian affairs, and other vital information. The objective is to help future researchers more readily find the information they are seeking. Contact Monty Healy at 781-934-6989 or monty15@msn.com.



BY LAMONT "MONTY" HEALY

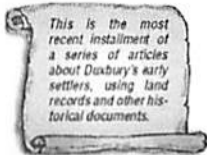


Myles Standish

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Bradford Farm



This is the most recent installment of a series of articles about Duxbury's early settlers, using land records and other historical documents.

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